



Setting Goals, Tracking Progress and Using Pyramids

Setting Goals

Every week of the Healthy Harvest program you are asked to meet goals for eating grains, vegetables and fruits. More below on deciding how much of these to eat.

For Week 1, begin on Monday September 9 – the first day of the program. (The space next to the day of the week ____ / ____ can be used to write in the date.) The booklet contains some suggestions to help you plan “stretch” goals. Give yourself a few extra minutes every week to browse recipe sites or cookbooks, or select a new food at the grocery store.

Tracking Progress

Log sheets are provided for tracking your progress. Though it may seem time-consuming or even boring to track your food intake, it's a powerful *visual* tool for making changes. Consider that a significant percentage of successful “Maintainers” in the National Weight Control Registry identified written self-monitoring as one of their top tools for successfully keeping off weight. Some people prefer to develop their own tracking system using a pocket-sized notebook, spreadsheet, Palm Pilot or other. Whatever system you use, keep it simple and in a convenient location.

Using Pyramids

The standard USDA Food Guide Pyramid is included in the booklet, along with a brief chart for determining how many servings to eat at different calorie levels. This is meant only as a guide. Though everyone should strive for a *minimum* of 5 servings of fruits and vegetables daily, the number of servings from grains (bread, cereal, rice, and pasta) can vary more widely. For people selecting a somewhat lower carbohydrate intake, 4-5 high quality, whole grain choices may be adequate to help meet needs for fiber, B vitamins, iron, zinc and other key nutrients.

For reference, it can be useful to know the calories and energy nutrients provided by similar foods. Using a system called the Exchange List, it is possible to estimate the nutrient contribution of “Exchanges” (servings) from the different food groups. Serving sizes are similar to *What's a Serving?* in the Healthy Harvest booklet.

| 1 Serving/Exchange | Carbohydrate | Protein | Fat | Calories |
|--|--------------|---------|------|----------|
| Grains (Starches & Starchy Vegetables) | 15 | 3 | 0-1+ | 80+ |
| Vegetables | 5 | 2 | 0 | 25 |
| Fruits | 15 | 0 | 0 | 60 |

Web sites for more information

- *Other Food Guide Pyramids* (Ethnic/Cultural, Healthy Weight, etc.), USDA's Food & Nutrition Information Center <http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/Fpyr/pyramid.html>
- *Visual Reality: Standard Serving Sizes vs. Real Serving Sizes*, National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute's Cholesterol site <http://nhlbisupport.com/chd1/visualreality/visualreality.htm>